

Grate.Pair.Share.

COOKING & ENTERTAINING WITH WISCONSIN CHEESE

Masterfully Made

A look inside the Wisconsin
Master Cheesemaker[®]
Program



Whipped Feta with
Roasted Grapes
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



All the seasons in Wisconsin are lovely, but there's something magical about fall—the crisp air, wild anticipation of cozy things ahead, and, of course, those pleasing aromas coming from the kitchen!

One delicious way to enjoy autumn's abundance is with a progressive dinner (page 11). This dinner party idea featuring specialty cheeses gives everyone (and every course) a chance to shine. Going from house to house with friends as leaves crunch under your feet is so fun, and since we're all

busy in the fall, it's perfect because the workload is light—you only prepare one course! So, pick a theme for the meal; let your course become a creative experience with a unique cheese pairing, gorgeous harvest tablescapes and candlelight, or even wear costumes.

One of my favorite cheeses this time of year is sweet, nutty Wood River Creamery® Cheddar Gruyere. It's a one-of-a-kind cheese from Master Cheesemaker Bruce Willis that blends the delectable characteristics of two cheeses. Bruce crafts several flavors of this masterwork. Savor his Applewood Smoked Sea Salt cheese in our comforting Cheddar Gruyere and Sausage Pasta Toss (page 31) or Herbes de Provence in dinner rolls (page 30) that are to die for.

We can thank the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program (page 33) for encouraging experienced cheesemakers like Bruce to become passionate world-class cheese artists. Today, Wisconsin is the only place outside Europe where you can become a Master Cheesemaker. It's not an easy title to obtain. You must make cheese for a decade before applying, so it takes 13 years minimum to become a Master. This elite education program is one of the reasons Wisconsin is such a special cheesemaking region. Our cheesemaking ancestors were experts from places like Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, and they chose to settle in the state because the soil and water offered the perfect conditions for making great cheese. We think we've made them proud with the works of art our Master Cheesemakers have created and the countless awards they've won worldwide, and we *know* our cheeses will help you master your fall celebrations!

Cheers to cheese!

Suzanne Fanning

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A Movable Feast

Plan a delicious night and gather your loved ones for a cheese-filled progressive dinner. This fun entertaining idea is perfect for Friendsgiving!



The Best of Two Cheeses

Experience double the pleasure with Wood River Creamery® Cheddar Gruyere, a delectable masterwork captivating fans worldwide.



The Mark of a Master

Learn how the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program turns licensed cheesemakers into world-class creators who make the cheeses you crave.

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Cheeselandia

Celebrating Moments with Cheese

Sweet Endings

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Grate it. Rate it.

We love receiving reviews and helpful advice from passionate cooks and bakers who have tried our recipes. The reviews are valuable to us and much appreciated. Please keep the feedback coming! If you've tried a recipe, leave your opinions and any recipe tips at: WisconsinCheese.com/Recipes.

Flammkuchens (German Pizzas)



Pizza Night

I made this for my husband, who loves German food and pizza. This delicious pizza gave him the best of both!

— *Carblaze*

Sausage-Fondue Bread Stuffing



Easy and Impressive

This dish has vintage supper club energy yet is delicious for present-day palates. I loved the addition of cherries. For the fondue, I substituted chicken broth with a spritz of lemon juice for the wine; it worked great.

— *MegP21*

Honey-Glazed Root Vegetables



Loved It

I had never cooked beets this way before, but it worked. The honey glaze was so good with the root vegetables, and I loved the addition of **Sartori Black Pepper BellaVitano®!**

— *socaltwinmommy*

Cheddar-Apple Pie Bars

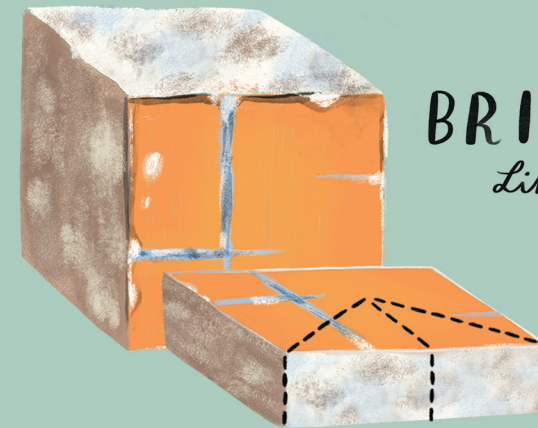


Big on Flavor

This simple, fast recipe is very easy to throw together. **Hook's Sharp Cheddar** is perfect with tart apples. I make it in a cast-iron skillet, and instead of a crumbled crust, I pat out 2-inch circles of pastry to lay on top a sprinkling of cheddar. Yummy!

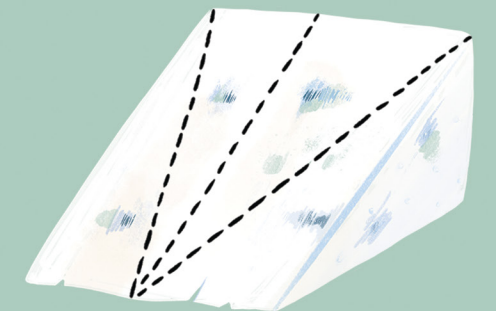
— *Foodloverkathy*

HOW TO CUT CHEESE



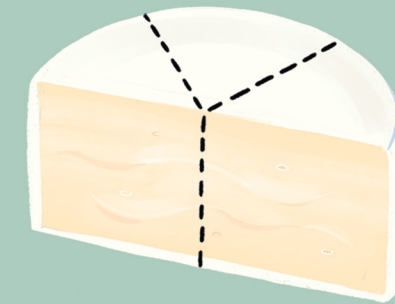
BRICKS & BLOCKS

Like *Roelli™ Cheese Haus Red Rock*



BLUE WEDGES

Like *Hook's Original Blue*

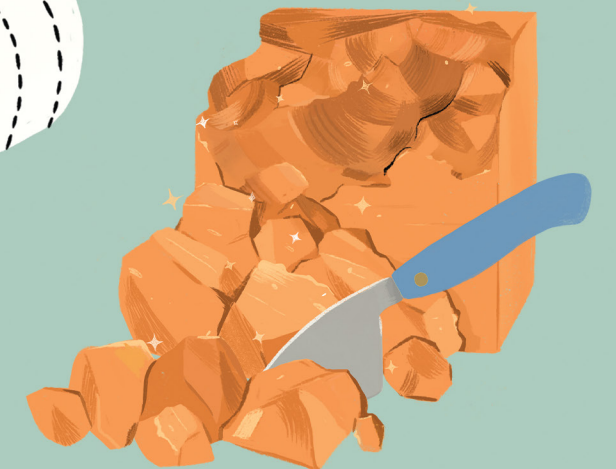


SOFT CHEESES

Like *Hoard's Dairyman Farm Creamery St. Saviour*

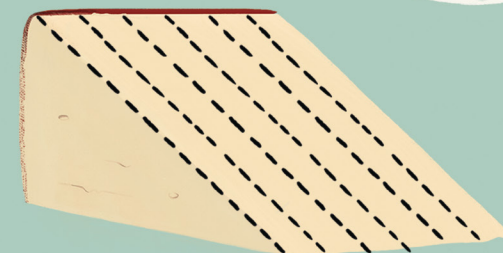
LOG-SHAPED CHEESES

Like *Crave Brothers Fresh Mozzarella*



FIRM AGED CHEESES

Like *Hook's 20-Year Cheddar*



FIRM WEDGES

Like *Roth® Grand Cru® Surchoix*



WisconsinCheese.com



Harvest Cheese Pairings

Pumpkin spice, candied nuts, crisp apple and salted caramel—classic fall flavors meet specialty cheeses with an autumnal vibe in simple bites that highlight the season’s best.





Cheeselandia community member Carrie S. held "A Spring Awakening" Super Host event in a lovely rooftop greenhouse in Chicago. There, guests created marinated cheese creations by filling mason jars with **BelGioioso Fresh Mozzarella Ciliegine**, olive oil, vinegar, and their choice of spices and herbs. They also enjoyed signature botanical libations and an amazing Wisconsin Cheese grazing table featuring jewels like **Deer Creek® The Stag®**, **Uplands Pleasant Ridge Reserve**, **Alpinage Mount Raclette™**, **Schroeder Käse Triple Creme Brie** and **Roelli Dunbarton Blue®**.



***Want in on the fun?** Be part of an enthusiastic community of Wisconsin cheese lovers and participate through in-person and virtual experiences. You'll learn from the best and have an opportunity to share your cheese-inspired creativity with others. Join today at: www.cheeseapplication.com/apply.*

A Movable Feast

Savor the sweet spot before the start of the holiday season's hustle with an autumn-themed progressive dinner. Serve a cozy three-course meal perfect for fall featuring Wisconsin's specialty cheeses. The cheeses elevate the menu with unique stories, rich flavors and exceptional craftsmanship. These are the dishes to share for Friendsgiving or when you want an exciting excuse for house-hopping with your favorite people on the weekend.

What is a progressive dinner? As the saying goes, many hands make light work—this is especially true for this entertaining idea, making it so appealing! Each course is meant to be made and served at a different destination so that no one is left shouldering the entire meal. You can prep your part of the meal at home, pulling out all the stops with special details like gorgeous harvest tablescapes, while your loved ones do the same at their houses.



First Course:

Kick the night off and impress your guests with an appetizer, warm cheese pastries and a flavorful butternut squash soup. Spread around the fun and give each guest a stunning, savory snack with crackers served on mini boards. Delightful **Pine River Swiss & Almond Cold Pack cheese** steals the show crafted with aged natural swiss and cheddar; it's a creamy, sharp and spreadable backdrop for a sprinkle of seasonal toppings like dried cranberries, toasted almonds, minced fresh thyme and a pinch of flaky sea salt.



Round out the course with cheese pastries served alongside soup. **Roth Grand Cru® Surchoix** takes center stage in these pastries; it was the 2016 World Champion cheese! Plenty of umami deliciousness is in each bite as this washed-rind, alpine-style treasure delivers complex caramel, fruit and mushroom notes. The notes are amplified with portobello mushrooms and sweet caramelized onions. A dollop of cranberry sauce lends a pretty pop of color and a pleasant autumnal touch.

A velvety bowl of butternut squash soup is extra elegant with the addition of **Saxon Big Ed's Gouda**, a handcrafted gem with bold buttery, sweet, nutty notes and a bright grassy finish. It was named one of the Top 20 cheeses at the 2018 World Championship Cheese Contest! Like its namesake, Big Ed's is a cheese that "hugs you back and never offends." It's an easygoing gouda and an incredible choice for melting. Complete the look and garnish servings with ribbons of shaved gouda goodness.



Grand Cru® Surchoix Cheese Pastries

Makes 18 Pastries

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter, cubed and divided
- 1 package (8 ounces) sliced baby portobello mushrooms
- 2 medium onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon dry white wine or balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme
- 8 ounces **Roth Grand Cru® Surchoix cheese**, shredded and divided (2 cups)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 box (17.3 ounces) frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 cup whole-berry cranberry sauce, warmed
- Fresh thyme leaves

Instructions

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Add mushrooms; cook and stir for 4-6 minutes or until tender. Transfer mushrooms to a bowl. Wipe out the pan.

Melt remaining butter in the same pan over medium heat. Add onions; cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cook for 20-25 minutes longer or until onions are golden brown, stirring occasionally. Add wine; cook and stir until liquid is absorbed. Stir in thyme and mushrooms.

Reduce heat to low. Gradually stir in 1 cup Grand Cru® until melted. Remove from the heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Heat oven to 400°F. Line two 15 x 10-inch baking pans with parchment paper.

Unfold one sheet puff pastry on a lightly floured surface; roll out into a 9-inch square. Cut pastry into 9 squares, 3-inches each. Transfer pastries to prepared pan. Score a 1/2-inch border on edges of pastries with a knife. Prick inside of pastries with a fork. Repeat step with remaining pastry. Brush pastries with egg wash.

Spoon heaping tablespoonful mushroom mixture into the center of each square. Sprinkle with remaining Grand Cru®. Bake for 18-20 minutes or until golden brown. Dot with cranberry sauce. Garnish with thyme. Serve with remaining cranberry sauce.

Creamy Butternut Squash Soup

Servings 4 (1 1/2 Quarts)

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large butternut squash (about 4 pounds), peeled, seeded and cubed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh sage
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup apple cider
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 ounces **Saxon Big Ed's Gouda cheese**, shredded (2 cups)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Sour cream
- Additional **Saxon Big Ed's Gouda cheese**, shaved
- Optional toppings: fried sage leaves and pepitas

Instructions

Warm olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add squash and onion; cook and stir for 5-6 minutes or until onion is crisp-tender. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add garlic and sage; cook and stir for 1 minute.

Gradually stir in vegetable broth and apple cider. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes or until squash is tender, stirring occasionally.

Gradually whisk in the cream, cinnamon, nutmeg and cayenne pepper. Remove from the heat. Cool slightly.

Process soup, in batches, in a blender or with an immersion blender until smooth. Return to the pan. Warm soup over low heat, stirring constantly. Gradually stir in gouda until melted. Remove from the heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Garnish servings with sour cream, additional gouda and toppings as desired.



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a yellow sweater, is seated at a wooden table in a restaurant. She is smiling and looking towards the right. In front of her is a plate of food, and she is using a fork and knife to eat. The background is slightly blurred, showing other diners and a bookshelf.

Second Course:

Dinner is served. The main event awaits you at the next location. **Weyauwega Star Dairy Parmesan** and panko bread crumbs are tossed with seasonings, creating a light and mouthwatering crumb coating for chicken. A side of sweet corn gets treated to an extra dose of comfort, greeted with green chiles, crisp bacon, rich **Crystal Farms Original Cream Cheese**, and additional nutty, buttery parmesan. The cheeses take this dynamic duo to a memorable, decadent place you won't want to leave.

A close-up view of a coffee bar. In the foreground, there's a wooden cutting board with several round, golden-brown cookies. Next to them are several slices of cheese, some of which are topped with a dark sauce and fresh strawberries. A small glass bowl filled with fresh raspberries is also visible. In the background, there are coffee-making equipment like a grinder and a press, and a glass of coffee.

Third Course:

This is not traditional coffee and desserts. Instead, end the evening with a coffee bar and dessert cheese pairing experience. Set up the bar with sweet treats, berries and coffee syrups. And then take part in a Finnish tradition: Dunk dainty bites of buttery and baked **Pasture Pride Juusto™ Traditional Baked Cheese** into your coffee for a remarkable cheese tasting. Or sample the cheese warm with fresh berries, jam and cookies. Coffee paired with earthy and exotic **Cello® Mayan Cocoa & Coffee Fontal** and hand-rubbed **Sartori Espresso BellaVitano®** levels up the coffee notes of the cheeses. Fontal is a young, creamy cheese, while the aged BellaVitano® is a hard, creamy cheese, allowing you to enjoy their distinct textures *and* clever flavors. Include coffee mix-ins like hazelnut and Irish cream liqueurs or creamers in your spread. Dark-roast coffee and libations complement the specialty cheese and coffee notes, making each bite indulgent. Explore and experiment with your favorite coffee shop goodies to personalize and display custom cheese pairings.



Parmesan-Crusted Chicken and Creamed Corn

Servings 6

Ingredients

Chicken:

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups panko bread crumbs
- 4 ounces **Weyauwega Star Dairy Parmesan cheese**, finely shredded (about 1 1/3 cups)
- 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper
- 6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 ounces each)
- 1/3 cup olive oil

Creamed Corn:

- 2 tablespoons butter, cubed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 5 cups fresh or frozen corn, thawed
- 1 medium sweet red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 can (7 ounces) chopped green chiles, undrained
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 2/3 cup heavy whipping cream
- 4 ounces **Weyauwega Star Dairy Parmesan cheese**, finely shredded (about 1 1/3 cups)
- 1/2 package (4 ounces) **Crystal Farms Original Cream Cheese**, cubed
- 8 thick-cut bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

Chicken:

Heat oven to 350°F. Line a 15 x 10-inch baking pan with parchment paper.

Combine the flour, garlic powder and onion powder in a large, shallow bowl. Lightly beat eggs in a separate large, shallow bowl. Combine the bread crumbs, parmesan, salt and pepper in another large, shallow bowl.

Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Coat chicken in flour mixture. Dip chicken into eggs; then coat with parmesan mixture, shaking off any extra coating between steps. Place chicken on a platter.

Warm olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken in batches; cook for 2-3 minutes on each side or until browned. Transfer chicken to prepared pan. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until a thermometer inserted into meat reads 165°F.

Creamed Corn:

Meanwhile, melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion; cook and stir for 4-6 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add the corn, red bell pepper, green chiles, garlic and red pepper flakes; cook and stir for 4-5 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender.

Reduce heat to low. Stir in cream; heat through. Gradually stir in parmesan and cream cheese until melted. Add bacon; heat through. Remove from the heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve corn with chicken.

Dessert and Coffee Cheese Board

Servings 6-8

Ingredients

Pasture Pride Juusto™ Traditional Baked Cheese (juustoleipa)

Cello® Mayan Cocoa & Coffee Fontal cheese

Sartori Espresso BellaVitano® cheese

Fresh raspberries

Fresh strawberries

Chocolate-covered coffee beans

Store-bought pizzelle and shortbread cookies

Coffee

Instructions

Warm juustoleipa in a large, nonstick skillet over medium heat for 2-3 minutes on each side or until warmed through. Transfer cheese to a cutting board. Cut juustoleipa into slices.

Arrange the fontal, BellaVitano® and juustoleipa on a serving board. Fill in and around the board with berries, coffee beans and cookies. Serve with coffee.



— THE BEST OF — **TWO CHEESES**

What do you get when you blend two of the most iconic cheeses in the world, cheddar and gruyère? It's an award-winning artisan masterpiece that's captivated fans worldwide. Wood River Creamery® Cheddar Gruyere is a tasty example highlighting the endless possibilities of cheesemaking. Every batch is a testament to the skill and devotion of Burnett Dairy® Cooperative's Master Cheesemaker, Bruce Willis. This one-of-a-kind specialty cheese beautifully fuses the decadent characteristics of cheddar and gruyère cheeses. It's a showpiece of Bruce's innovative cheesemaking chops, a craft he's honed by passion and dedication for over 45 years.



THE MAKING OF A MASTERPIECE

This delicious beauty was no accident. For Bruce, its conception was as intentional as the traditional mozzarellas, colbys and cheddars he made decades before Wood River Creamery® Cheddar Gruyere debuted. “I came up with this back in 2006,” shares Bruce. “I wanted to make something unique...I wanted something that could be a good table cheese but still have a good melting ability when it came to cooking.”



Using quality milk from farmer-owned Burnett Dairy® Cooperative in Grantsburg, Bruce launched a meticulous journey of blending cultures and cheesemaking techniques to craft this new cheese. “I desired to do it right, so I did it in small batches,” Bruce recalls. “It took about three years to get everything blended just right. I would consider it a cheddar that’s been ‘gruyered’.”

Every bite of Wood River Creamery® Cheddar Gruyere is a delicate dance between texture and taste; it’s an intriguing cheese for connoisseurs. Each block is aged to perfection for six to eight months. The texture is smooth and creamy with pockets of tyrosine crystals, which imparts a delightful mouthfeel. “Aging brings out the sweetness of the cheese,” explains Bruce. There are sweet, nutty notes you would expect from a classic alpine-style cheese like gruyère and a pleasantly sharp bite of cheddar flavor on the finish, leaving you craving more.



— ADDING FLAIR WITH FLAVOR —

Master Cheesemaker Bruce Willis continues to evolve the brand, adding premium ingredients to the original cheddar gruyere, creating an array of artisanal flavors that cheese lovers won’t find anywhere else. His efforts earned Burnett Dairy® accolades, including Second Place at the 2014 American Cheese Society Cheese Competition and Best of Class at the 2014 World Championship Cheese Contest. “Becoming a Master Cheesemaker really drives the passion,” says Bruce. “You get exposed to other experienced cheesemakers, and your passion for cheesemaking grows. That’s when it kicked in (for me) regarding a passion for developing something unique.”

Enjoy flavors like Chipotle Garlic, Triple Pepper, Applewood Smoked Sea Salt and Herbes de Provence. And there’s even Wood River Creamery® Black Truffle. It’s accented with Italian black truffles. Showcase these crowd-pleasers center stage on a cheese board paired with local honey, dried fruits and nuts. Or melt them on gourmet flatbreads, as a luxurious filling for homemade dinner rolls, and on top of pasta. Pair each satisfying bite with a sip of chardonnay or a refreshing wheat beer.



Ready to experience these creative flavors?
Try the recipes on the following pages!

HERBES DE PROVENCE CHEDDAR GRUYERE — DINNER ROLLS —

Makes 12 Rolls

Ingredients

- 4 cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tablespoons butter, cubed
- 1 large egg

Filling:

- 10 tablespoons butter, cubed, softened and divided
- 8 ounces **Wood River Creamery® Herbes de Provence Cheddar Gruyere cheese**, shredded and divided (2 cups)
- 3/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- Minced fresh parsley

Instructions

Combine the 2 cups flour, sugar, yeast and salt in a large mixing bowl. Warm the milk, water and butter to 120°F - 130°F in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add to dry ingredients; beat just until combined. Beat in egg until well combined. Add remaining flour, 1/4 cup at a time, until dough clears sides of bowl (dough will be sticky).

Knead dough in mixer or turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface; knead for 6-8 minutes or until smooth and elastic. Place dough into a greased bowl. Flip to grease top. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1-2 hours.

Punch dough down. Knead a few times by hand. Cover with plastic wrap. Let rest for 10 minutes. Roll out dough on a lightly floured surface into a 15 x 10-inch rectangle, about 1/4-inch thick.

Filling:

Combine the 8 tablespoons butter, 1 1/2 cups cheddar gruyere, parsley, garlic, salt and pepper in a bowl. Spread butter mixture on dough to within 1/2 inch of edges.

Roll up dough, jelly-roll style, starting with a long side. Cut into 12 slices. Place slices cut side down into a greased 13 x 9-inch baking pan. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 1 hour.

Heat oven to 350°F. Bake for 18-20 minutes or until light golden brown.

Melt remaining butter; brush over rolls. Sprinkle with remaining cheddar gruyere. Bake for 4-5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with parsley.



CHEDDAR GRUYERE AND SAUSAGE PASTA TOSS

Servings 4-6

Ingredients

3 cups cubed root vegetables (carrots, parsnips, beets), cut into 1/2-inch cubes

1 tablespoon olive oil

Salt and pepper

1 package (16 ounces) uncooked orecchiette pasta

3 tablespoons butter, cubed and divided

1 pound fully cooked chicken sausage links, halved and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1/2 cup chopped onion

3 garlic cloves, minced

1/2 cup chicken stock

2 cups fresh baby spinach, coarsely chopped

1 tablespoon minced fresh sage

1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme

6 ounces **Wood River Creamery® Applewood Smoked Sea Salt Cheddar Gruyere**, finely shredded (about 1 1/2 cups)

Additional **Wood River Creamery® Applewood Smoked Sea Salt Cheddar Gruyere**, shredded

Instructions

Heat oven to 400°F. Line a 15 x 10-inch baking pan with aluminum foil. Grease foil.

Drizzle vegetables with olive oil on prepared pan; toss to coat. Arrange vegetables in a single layer. Lightly season with salt and pepper.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until vegetables are tender, turning once. Transfer vegetables to a bowl. Keep warm.

Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions until al dente. Drain, reserving 1 cup hot pasta water.

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add sausage; cook and stir for 3-4 minutes or until heated through. Transfer sausage to a bowl. Add onion; cook and stir for 4-6 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add garlic; cook and stir for 1 minute. Stir in chicken stock. Bring to a boil, stirring to loosen any browned bits from bottom of pan. Cook and stir until stock is reduced to about 1/4 cup.

Reduce heat to low. Add the spinach, vegetables and sausage; cook and stir until spinach is wilted. Add pasta and 1/2 cup reserved pasta water; cook and toss for 1-2 minutes or until water is slightly reduced. Stir in the sage, thyme and remaining butter.

Remove from the heat. Gradually add cheddar gruyere, tossing well after each addition. Add remaining pasta water, a tablespoon at a time, until desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper. Garnish with additional cheddar gruyere.





THE MARK OF A MASTER

Whether hosting a party or treating yourself to something special, making cheese selections at your local grocery or specialty store amidst a sea of rich blues, cheddars and goudas can be overwhelming. How do you choose quality cheeses you can count on to taste delicious? Here's a pro tip: Check if a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker[®] crafted the cheeses you're about to take home.





2024 Graduating Class of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program

HEAD OF THE CLASS

The only program of its kind in the U.S. and outside of Europe, the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program has been turning licensed cheesemakers into Masters for 30 years. Made possible through joint sponsorship with the Center for Dairy Research (CDR), University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension, and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, this advanced education program allows cheesemakers to reach the highest levels of their craft while providing consumers with delectable cheeses made with quality assurance, expertise, and innovation.

Established in 1994, the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program is dedicated to upholding the unparalleled standards of Wisconsin cheesemaking. This "Ph.D. in cheese" leads experienced cheesemakers to become world-class cheese creators through a formal sequence of courses like cheese artisanship, grading and technology, and food safety.

Only veteran cheesemakers who have been making cheese and have held a cheesemaker's license for a minimum of 10 years—with at least five years of experience crafting the cheese variety for which they seek certification—are invited to apply. Graduating from the program is a point of excellence and pride that cheesemakers take seriously.

MAKING THE GRADE

It takes nearly three years from a cheesemaker's acceptance into the program until graduation. In addition to completing a rigorous series of required and elective courses, cheesemakers also participate in an apprenticeship during which they submit samples for evaluation. Near the end of the program, cheesemakers complete a final written exam to graduate, which could take up to 40 hours to complete!

"The Master's program was very important to me," says North America's most decorated cheesemaker, Master Cheesemaker Sid Cook of Carr Valley Cheese. His certifications include cheddar, fontina and mixed-milk varieties like Gran Canaria®. "It gave me a lot of insight into how other cheesemakers make cheese."





A COMMUNITY OF CHEESE CHAMPIONS

The Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program gives our cheesemakers a significant advantage recognized worldwide and assists in designating the state as the epicenter of specialty cheeses. But what does that mean for you? Some of the world's best cheeses are at your fingertips. Cheeses crafted by a Master Cheesemaker are of the highest quality and backed by years of commitment and education.

While Masters are awarded a medal at their graduation ceremony, most leave the program with something far more precious. They depart with an appetite to explore all the possibilities of cheese and are eager to share knowledge and that excitement with their teams and the community. So, while the list of elite Master Cheesemakers is short yet impressive, the program has been instrumental in elevating the industry, building a legacy of artistry *and* science in cheesemaking that lasts for generations.



Master Cheesemaker Andy Hatch (right photo), the owner of **Uplands Cheese**, earned his certification in Hard Surface Ripened Cheese in 2024. Andy handcrafts the renowned **Pleasant Ridge Reserve**, the most awarded cheese in American history. “I love taking classes and continuing my education, but I’ve never been able to convince myself to take the time, so this was useful because it gave me an organized push into formal education,” Andy shares. “It’s particularly meaningful to me because I wasn’t born into it. And I feel very grateful that the industry has supported someone like me...I’ve really been brought along by everyone else in this state, so I’m very grateful for that.”



Beyond the books and the experts, cheesemakers often rely on their classmates as teachers, as they bring out the best in each other through collaboration and communication while helping to uphold each other to specific standards. “We’d always head down to the local pub and have some beers after class—that’s when the learning really began [laughs]!” says Master Cheesemaker Kerry Henning (left photo) of **Henning’s Wisconsin Cheese**, who got his first certification in the late 1990s. “It’s a very close-knit community here in Wisconsin. We want people to succeed, and we want people to make good cheese.”

Learn more about Kerry and the Masters behind the cheeses featured in the following recipes.



CAN YOU SPOT THE SEAL OF EXCELLENCE?

The Master’s Mark is exclusive to Wisconsin’s Master Cheesemakers. Only certified cheesemakers can display this or their personalized mark on the packaging. To use the mark, a Master Cheesemaker must supervise cheesemaking and continue participating in the quality assurance program. The mark is used only on specific cheeses for which the cheesemaker is certified.



WHIPPED FETA WITH ROASTED GRAPES

Servings 6-8

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 4 cups seedless red and green grapes

Whipped Feta:

- 9 ounces crumbled **Odyssey® Traditional Feta cheese** (1 1/2 cups)
- 1/4 cup whole milk plain Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
- 2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Coarsely ground pepper to taste
- Fresh thyme leaves
- Crostini

Instructions

Heat oven to 425°F. Line a 17 x 12-inch baking pan with parchment paper.

Whisk the balsamic vinegar, honey, Dijon mustard and thyme in a small bowl. Slowly whisk in olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Drizzle grapes with 1/4 cup vinaigrette on prepared pan; toss to coat. Arrange grapes in a single layer. Lightly season with salt and pepper.

Bake for 25-30 minutes or until grapes are softened, turning once.

Whipped Feta:

Place the feta, yogurt, lemon zest and thyme into a food processor; cover and process until mixture is combined. While processing, slowly drizzle in olive oil until desired consistency. Season with pepper to taste.

Transfer whipped feta to a serving bowl. Drizzle with remaining vinaigrette. Top with grapes. Garnish with thyme. Serve with crostini.

KLONDIKE CHEESE COMPANY, MONROE

This family-owned, fourth-generation business is home to five Master Cheesemakers, each certified in several cheeses. “Wisconsin really prides itself on making the world’s best cheese, and to be part of that as a Master with the other Masters making famous Wisconsin cheeses, it’s just a great honor,” says Adam. Matt adds, “I think the program is just a fantastic resource to continue driving the art and science of cheesemaking. You can’t say enough about it.”



MATT ERDLEY
BRICK, GOUDA, HAVARTI,
AND MUENSTER



ADAM BUHOLZER
BRICK, FETA, GOUDA,
AND HAVARTI



DAVE BUHOLZER
FETA AND MUENSTER



RON BUHOLZER
BRICK AND FETA



STEVE BUHOLZER
FETA AND MUENSTER

ROASTED PEAR AND MAPLE BOURBON CHEDDAR SALAD

Servings 6-8

Ingredients

Maple-Orange Vinaigrette:

- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Salad:

- 3 medium Anjou pears, cored and cut 1/2-inch slices
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- Salt and pepper
- 2 bags (5 ounces each) fresh baby kale salad mix (about 10 cups)
- 2 cups cooked red quinoa, cooled
- 1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup roasted salted pepitas
- 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds
- 6 ounces **Henning's Maple Bourbon Cheddar cheese**, shaved (1 1/2 cups)

Instructions

Maple-Orange Vinaigrette:

Whisk the maple syrup, balsamic vinegar, orange zest and Dijon mustard in a small bowl. Slowly whisk in olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Salad:

Heat oven to 400°F. Line a 15 x 10-inch baking pan with aluminum foil.

Drizzle pears with olive oil and maple syrup on prepared pan; toss to coat. Arrange pears in a single layer. Lightly season with salt and pepper. Bake for 15-17 minutes or until pears are tender, turning once. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Toss salad mix with 1/4 cup vinaigrette in a large serving bowl. Top with the pears, red quinoa, red onion, pepitas and pomegranate seeds. Drizzle with remaining vinaigrette; toss to coat. Sprinkle with cheddar.

HENNING'S WISCONSIN CHEESE, KIEL

KERRY HENNING

CERTIFIED IN CHEDDAR, COLBY AND MONTEREY JACK

Kerry was in one of the first-ever graduating classes of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® Program. "When we went through the Master program, we got a stack of books a foot high," Kerry recalls. "Those resources help. And having the expertise (of world-class cheesemakers)—not every state has that." Today, Kerry passes down his knowledge and passion to the next generation and continues his family's 100+ years of cheesemaking tradition.



PARMESAN SHRIMP SCAMPI

Servings 6

Ingredients

- 1 medium spaghetti squash
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper

Parmesan Shrimp Scampi:

- 8 tablespoons butter, cubed and divided
- 1 large shallot, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 pounds uncooked large shrimp, peeled, deveined and tails on
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper
- 1 package (8 ounces) sliced wild or baby portobello mushrooms
- 1 3/4 cups dry white wine
- 1/2 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes (not packed in oil)
- Juice of 1 medium lemon
- 3 ounces **Eau Galle Parmesan cheese**, grated (1 cup)
- 3/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 8 thick-cut bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- Minced fresh parsley
- Additional **Eau Galle Parmesan cheese**, shaved

Instructions

Heat oven to 400°F. Line a 15 x 10-inch baking pan with aluminum foil.

Cut squash in half lengthwise; remove seeds and discard. Brush squash with olive oil. Sprinkle with garlic powder, salt and pepper. Place squash cut side down on prepared pan. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until tender.

When cool enough to handle, using a fork, scrape the squash strands into a bowl. Keep warm.

Parmesan Shrimp Scampi:

Meanwhile, melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add shallot; cook and stir for 2-3 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add the shrimp, garlic, red pepper flakes, salt and pepper; cook and stir for 4-5 minutes longer or until shrimp turn pink. Transfer shrimp mixture to a bowl. Keep warm.

Melt 4 tablespoons butter in the same pan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; cook and stir for 4-5 minutes or until tender. Reduce heat to medium-low. Gradually stir in the wine, sun-dried tomatoes and lemon juice. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir for 3 minutes.

Reduce heat to low. Gradually stir in parmesan until melted. Remove from the heat. Add shrimp and parsley.

Melt remaining butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Add bread crumbs; cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until toasted.

Toss spaghetti squash with shrimp mixture. Sprinkle with the bread crumbs, bacon, parsley and additional parmesan. Season with salt and pepper.



EAU GALLE CHEESE, DURAND

STEVE BECHEL

CERTIFIED IN PARMESAN AND ROMANO

Since 1945, Eau Galle Cheese has crafted some of the state's finest cheeses. Steve is at the helm. "What I thought was going to be a very repetitious job became something new every day," says Steve. "I am very proud to join the ranks of Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker®. It had been a goal of mine for a long time." Eau Galle Cheese has earned several awards at the United States and World Championship Cheese Contests for their parmesan and asiago cheeses.



Cran-Apple Gouda Pie

Servings 6-8

Ingredients

- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 ounces **Wakker Creamy Aged Gouda cheese** (aged 12-18 months), finely shredded (about 1 cup)
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed
- 1 cup ice water
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

Cranberry-Apple Pie Filling:

- 5 large Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 ounce **Wakker Creamy Aged Gouda cheese** (aged 12-18 months), finely shredded (about 1/4 cup)

Instructions

Combine the flour, gouda, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Cut in cold butter until mixture resembles pea-sized crumbs. Combine ice water and apple cider vinegar. Gradually add 1/2 cup water mixture, tossing with a fork. Add water mixture, a tablespoon at a time, until dough just holds together when pinched.

Shape dough into a rectangle; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Roll out dough on a lightly floured surface into an 11 x 9-inch rectangle. Fold dough into thirds, starting with the short sides. Rotate dough 90 degrees. Repeat rolling out, folding and rotating dough three times. Divide dough in half. Shape into two disks; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Cranberry-Apple Pie Filling:

Remove dough from the refrigerator 30 minutes before rolling out.

Gently toss the apples, cranberries, sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon, orange zest, salt, thyme, pepper, cloves and nutmeg in a large bowl. Let stand for 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, roll out one disk of dough on a lightly floured surface into a 10-inch circle. Transfer pastry to a 9-inch pie plate. Spoon pie filling into pastry.

Roll out remaining dough on a lightly floured surface into a 14 x 11-inch rectangle. Cut dough lengthwise into 14 x 3/4-inch-wide strips. Weave pastry strips over pie, creating a lattice, allowing excess dough to drape over the sides. Trim pastry to 1/2 inch of plate; pinch and flute edges. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Heat oven to 400°F.

Brush pastry with egg wash. Place pie on a baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes.

Reduce oven temperature to 350°F. Sprinkle with gouda. Bake for 30-35 minutes longer or until filling is bubbly and crust is golden brown. Lightly cover with foil if crust is over-browning. Cool on a wire rack.





WISCONSIN CHEESE COMPANY DIRECTORY

CHEESEMAKERS IN THE STATE OF CHEESE PRODUCE MORE THAN 600 VARIETIES, TYPES AND STYLES OF WISCONSIN CHEESE. LOOK FOR WISCONSIN CHEESE AND OTHER DAIRY PRODUCTS MADE BY THESE COMPANIES. **COMPANIES IN BOLD ARE FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE.**

Agropur, Inc.
 All Star, LTD
Alpinage Artisan Cheese
 Arena Cheese, Inc.
 Arla Foods, Inc.
 Associated Milk Producers, Inc.—Corporate
 Babcock Hall Dairy Plant
 Bel Brands USA
BelGioioso Cheese, Inc.—Corporate
 Brunkow Cheese of Wisconsin
Burnett Dairy Cooperative
 Caprine Supreme, LLC
Carr Valley Cheese Company, Inc.
 Cascade Cheese Company
 Castle Rock Organic Farms
 Cedar Grove Cheese
 Cedar Valley Cheese, Inc.
 Cesar’s Cheese
 Chalet Cheese Cooperative
 Cosmic Wheel Creamery
 Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, LLC
Crystal Farms Cheese
 Decatur Dairy, Inc.
Deer Creek Cheese
 Delta Dream, LLC
 Door Artisan Cheese Company
 Dupont Cheese, Inc.

Eau Galle Cheese Factory, Inc.
 Edelweiss Creamery
 Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery
 F&A Dairy Products, Inc.
 Foremost Farms USA Cooperative
 Gibbville Cheese Company, Inc.
 Gile Cheese, LLC / Carr Cheese Factory
 Gilman Cheese Corporation
 Harmony Specialty Dairy Foods, LLC
Henning’s Wisconsin Cheese
 Hidden Springs Creamery
 Hill Valley Dairy, LLC
 Hoard’s Dairyman Farm Creamery
Hook’s Cheese Company, Inc.
 Keystone Farms Cheese
 Kingston Creamery
Klondike Cheese Company
 Koepke Family Farms
 Laack Brothers Cheese Company, Inc.
 LaClare Farms—Mosaic Meadows
 Lactalis American Group, Inc.
 LaGrandier’s Hillside Dairy, Inc.
 Land O’Lakes, Inc.
 Landmark Creamery
 LoveTree Farmstead Cheese
 Lynn Dairy, Inc.
 Malcore Foods, Inc.

Maple Grove Cheese, Inc.
 Maple Leaf Cheese
 Marieke Gouda
 McCluskey Brothers Organic Farms
 Meister Cheese Company
 Mexican Cheese Producers, Inc.
 Milkhaus Dairy
Milk Source
 Mullins Cheese, Inc.
 Nasonville Dairy, Inc.
 Nordic Creamery
 North Country Packaging, Inc.
 Oak Grove Dairy, Inc.
 Organic Valley
Pasture Pride Cheese, LLC
Pine River Pre-Pack
 Prairie Farms Cheese Division
 Red Apple Cheese
 Red Barn Family Farms
 Renard’s Cheese
Roelli Cheese Haus
 Ron’s Wisconsin Cheese
Roth Cheese
 Saputo Cheese USA, Inc.
Sartori Company
 Schreiber Foods, Inc.—Corporate
Schroeder Käse

Schuman Cheese
 Scott’s of Wisconsin
 Scray Cheese Company
 Shullsburg Creamery
 Silver-Lewis Cheese Factory Cooperative
 Specialty Cheese Company, Inc.
Springside Cheese Corporation
 Union Star Corporation
Uplands Cheese Company
 Valley View Cheese Cooperative
 V&V Supremo Foods, Inc.
 W&W Dairy, Inc.
Wakker Cheese
 Westby Cooperative Creamery
 Weyauwega Cheese
Weyauwega Star Dairy, Inc.
 White Jasmine
 Widmer’s Cheese Cellars, Inc.
 Willow Creek Cheese
 Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese, Inc.
 Wisconsin Cheese Group (Sabrosura Foods)
 Wisconsin Dairy State Cheese Company
 Wiskerchen Cheese, Inc.
 Wohlt Cheese
 Yellowstone Cheese, Inc.
 Zimmerman Cheese, Inc.



Why Wisconsin? That's an easy one.

Wisconsin is one of those places that does one thing better than anyone else anywhere. We've been making cheese in Wisconsin for over 180 years, which may be one reason we win so many awards for it. It's what happens when a whole state dreams in cheese.

EXPLORE NOW!



WisconsinCheese.com